



# From the Board Room

## ACTIVITIES OF THE NC BOARD OF EDUCATION

SEPTEMBER 2014

The State Board of Education is comprised of the State Treasurer, the Lieutenant Governor and 11 citizens appointed by the Governor. This newsletter highlights the Board’s activities on behalf of the 1.5 million public school children in our state and the more than 100,000 educators who provide services to children. View all State Board of Education member and advisor information online at <https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/AboutUs/AboutUs.aspx?S=10399&TID=1>. To access current and archived versions of From the Boardroom, visit <http://stateboard.ncpublicschools.gov/> and select the “SBE Newsletter” tab.

### GRADUATION RATE IS HIGHEST RECORDED IN NORTH CAROLINA HISTORY

North Carolina’s 2014 graduation rate rose to 83.8 percent, the highest recorded in the state’s history, according to data provided to the State Board of Education this month.

Since 2006, the first year the state reported a four-year cohort graduation rate, the percentage of students graduating from high school in four years or less has risen 15.5 percentage points – from 68.3 percent to 83.8 percent.

The rise in the graduation rate has occurred at the same time that the State Board of Education has strengthened graduation requirements, including increasing the number of course credits required as well as the rigor of courses needed to graduate, especially in mathematics. Students today are required to earn a minimum of 22 course credits and to complete a minimum of Algebra II or Math III, its equivalent.

“A top priority of the State Board of Education is to ensure that high school diplomas are meaningful and aligned with the skills and knowledge that students need in college and in careers,” said Board Chairman Bill Cobey. “It is good news that students are reaching higher standards and graduating in higher numbers as well.”

Subgroup	2014 Total Number	2014 Graduates	2014 Percent
All Students	109,869	92,106	83.8
Male	55,933	44,874	80.2
Female	53,936	47,232	87.6
American Indian	1,629	1,292	79.3
Asian	2,732	2,497	91.4
Black	30,010	23,933	79.8
Hispanic	12,034	9,304	77.3
Two or More Races	3,819	3,157	82.7
White	59,550	51,838	87.0
Economically Disadvantaged	47,895	37,334	77.9
Limited English Proficient	2,615	1,355	51.8
Students With Disabilities	10,381	6,687	64.4
Academically Gifted	18,219	–	>95



### 2013-14 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS RELEASED

In terms of academic growth, 74.7 percent of North Carolina public schools met or exceeded their academic growth goals last school year, according to the *2013-14 Performance and Growth of North Carolina Public Schools*. Statewide on all assessments, the percentage of students who scored college-and-career ready proficient is 46.2 and the percent grade-level proficient is 56.3.

This year marks the first time that proficiency information has been reported since the State Board of Education in March adopted a new five-level achievement scale replacing the previous four-level scale. Educators in the field requested this move to better describe the range and differences among students’ performance on end-of-grade and end-of-course tests. Achievement Level 3 is considered the state proficiency standard, and students at this level show sufficient mastery for the next grade. Achievement Levels 4 and 5 are considered career and college ready, and students at these levels show solid command and superior command of subject material respectively. Achievement Levels 1 and 2 show limited or partial command of subject material.

### CHARTER SCHOOL NUMBERS GROW; PROCEDURES FOR VIRTUAL CHARTER APPROVED

Eleven new charter schools were approved with a targeted opening date of August 2015. These schools and home counties are Charlotte Lab (Mecklenburg), Excelsior Classical (Durham) Ignite KIPP (Pitt): Durham Preparatory (Durham); Patriot Academy (Pitt); PAVE SE Raleigh (Wake); Piedmont Classical (Guilford); Queen City STEM (Mecklenburg); Shining Rock Classical (Haywood); VERITAS Community School (Mecklenburg); and Youngsville Academy (Franklin). These 11 will join the 150 charters already operating for students.

Potential virtual charter school applicants have until Oct. 10 to submit applications for the state’s pilot virtual charter school program, according to the process, application, and implementation timeline approved by the Board this month. The General Assembly’s budget bill this year directed implementation of a virtual charter pilot program to include two virtual charter schools for four years to serve kindergartners through 12th graders. Up to 1,500 students could be served in the first year, with growth up to 20 percent annually by the end of the pilot.